

Hobbs, NM – On Tuesday, May 18th, Congressman Harry Teague's bill to make "Katie's Law" the national standard will be voted on in the House of Representatives. The Katie Sepich Enhanced DNA Collection Act (H.R. 4614), which has the support of several national organizations, is a bipartisan bill that encourages states to maximize the potential of forensic DNA to solve and prevent violent crimes by collecting a DNA sample upon arrest at the same time as fingerprints -- for certain felony crimes.

"Tomorrow's vote is an important one that will go a long way in protecting our communities. With Katie's Law, we have the power through advanced DNA collection to prevent the type of tragedies and pain that the Sepich family endured," said Harry Teague, who introduced the bill in February. "It is time to make DNA technology available to all law enforcement across the country. I look forward to a national Katie's Law passing the House tomorrow and want to thank those that have supported the bill through the process."

Katie's Law is named after Katie Sepich, from Carlsbad, New Mexico. Katie was 22 years old when she was brutally raped and murdered in Las Cruces, New Mexico. If New Mexico had at that time required a DNA sample to be taken upon arrest, Katie's killer would have been caught three months after the murder when the murderer was arrested for another predatory crime.

Instead, the killer was released back onto the streets, it was three long years before he was finally apprehended again and linked to Katie's murder.

Harry Teague has worked with Katie's parents, Jayann and David Sepich of Carlsbad to develop this national law and multiple law enforcement and victim's rights groups have lined up to support the legislation, including the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), the Surviving Parents Coalition, National District Attorney's Association, and National Sheriff's Association.

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